



853 Asylum Ave., Hartford, Conn.
U.S.A. 14/xi/08.

My dear Goldzyher,

I can understand how you think that we left you in the lurch but it was not really so. We did not return by Budapest but by Fiume and Venice. We changed our plan when we saw that you would not be back from Copenhagen when we should get to Budapest. It was a great loss for us not to see you and your wife, but we had to get back to England as I had work to do at both Cambridge and Oxford.

I did not know that you had had to give up your journey over here and I am exceedingly sorry, both for your health and that we cannot have you

easily than Arabic. You cannot live there in a purely Arabic speaking environment. But I learned to know Cairo well; I met and talked with a great many people of different kinds and got some insight into their ways of thinking. As for learning literary Arabic I believe I can do that as well here in my study as with even a good native teacher in Cairo. They do not understand our need of exactness and I found that they regarded me as an accomplished grammarian because I knew the technical terms of grammar and prosody.

Yet I had some very interesting experiences I think I told you how, with the ^{Venian} ~~Venian~~ ^{Conrad} ~~Conrad~~ ^{Ganwer} ~~Ganwer, I headed the Ashura night procession down the Muslay. That is an experience never to be forgotten. It was painful for me also to go everywhere and see everything except the tomb-~~

with us again. It is a great pity, too, that the translation of your book is giving you so much trouble. Can I help you at all in revision? I think I would know what you wanted to say. I am very glad that you met Brown again at Copenhagen and I hope that all is now friendly between you. He was not at Cambridge or Caferel but I saw Bevan and Utholsson.

As to my own travels, I got a good deal out of them but of course not all that I should have wished. For one thing I fear that I am too old and my ear is too dull to pick up Arabic easily. I could do it in time but it would take time. Also I doubt whether Cairo is now the place for that. One can learn there almost any European language more

chamber of the head of Husayn. That I couldn't get into. It would have required disguise. At Jerusalem too, we had special freedom of the Haram area but I was too short a time at Hebron to work my way into the mosque there. Generally I found that when I could get at and talk to any of the Ulama, they would receive me and show me everything. Thus I had a very interesting time at Habbis, where the people are generally supposed to be fanatical. I had tea and a long talk with one of the teachers in the Jamia al-Kabir and he gave me a theological book and I promised him a copy of mine even though he couldn't read it! Later he came to me at the hotel and asked me not to send him the book. It would get him into trouble! But I suppose

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all that is changed now. At Damascus too, I could see a good deal and was allowed to photograph anything I pleased. Thus I have a photo of the very tomb of Muhiy al-din ibn Arabi — in the tomb-chamber — which, I think, he unifies. I found also a book-seller who had a lot of MSS stowed away in some back-premises as dark as pitch. He stuck a candle down on the table and looked me in by myself for two afternoons. The result was that I found over twenty little MSS of interest to me and got them all for a napoleon. With time I am sure I could have found more.

We were in Damascus when the news of the revolution arrived and the people only gradually took it in. But when they did

to me and said that he was permanently engaged by a Dutch gentleman who had been at Mecca, and that he was there on the terrace. So I walked straight up to him and said, "You must be Snouch (Turkic; my name is Macdonald). There isn't any other Dutchman who has been at Mecca. Thereafter I had a very pleasant time with him.

But perhaps the most interesting thing I all met me at In'ed and in the Boddain. There I found an Arabic MS with the story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves — the first to turn up. And it has been lying in the Bodleian since 1860! It is enough to make Burton turn in his grave that he should have worked there so long and yet missed it. I have had a photo made of it and shall print it before long. That is the last of Galland's stories to be identified in one way or another. I must not neglect more on you. I must

realize it, they went wild and the calvary drove about the streets shouting hurriya! They set off fireworks in the bazaar and I came upon a mock-combat, broadsword and target, down the middle of one bazaar.

From Damascus, round to Constantinople we were accompanied by returning exiles and lived in an atmosphere of speeches, brass-bands and wreaths of flowers. I read Vaska himself was on the steamer.

At Constantinople perhaps the most striking thing I saw was in Santa Sophia — a Greek priest in full canonicals chatting comfortably with one of the Imams. I don't suppose a priest in canonicals had been there since the conquest.

Did Snouch tell you how we met? It was on the terrace at the Salamlik. A dragoner whom I had been trying to engage came

have written much sooner, but
we have been settling in a new
house and between my Seminary
work and articles I have to write
I have been very busy all the
time.

My best regards to Mr. Goldfisher
and best greetings to you and
wishes for your health.

Truly Yours,
Damon B. MacDonald.

P.S. Mr. MacDonald has left me now
to say a word to tell you that I
was deeply disappointed in not seeing
you and Madame Goldfisher last
summer. That article that kept us
so long in Cairo knocked our plans
all to pieces. If you had had a common
language with Madame Goldfisher, we
might have gone by way of Bukhara
notwithstanding your absence; but
we think it would only be an obstacle
more - we have no method your long time.